

## OBTAINING MEDICAL SUPPORT FROM MILITARY PERSONNEL

### DEFENSE ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY REPORTING SYSTEM (DEERS)

The military health care program is called TRICARE/CHAMPUS (Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services). A system called DEERS (Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System) maintains the information on the military service person, known as the sponsor, and dependents enrolled in this program. The process for obtaining medical support from a military parent (active or retired) is described below.

#### ***Enrollment***

First of all, before any enrollment can occur, the child must be determined to be a military dependent in order to be enrolled in DEERS. The documents needed to establish dependency include a court-ordered paternity determination (if the child's parents were not married), birth certificate, and a court order for child support or other means of providing support. Each branch of the service may have slightly different procedures. The custodial parent must go to the nearest RAPIDS center and present the appropriate documents to the verifying officer. (RAPIDS stands for Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification Card System and refers to the program through which individuals receive ID cards and through which all personnel changes are made.)

Location of the nearest RAPIDS center may be found via the Internet at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/>. If Internet access is not available, the custodial parent may contact the DEERS telephone center help line Monday through Friday between 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (ET) at 1-(800) 538-9552.

A custodial parent wishing to enroll by mail should contact any military installation with a RAPIDS center for instructions. Documentation to prove dependency must be provided.

Before the DEERS enrollment can be completed, an attempt will be made to have the sponsor sign the paperwork. The amount of time for this process will vary depending on the location and the assignment of the military member. If the sponsor is unwilling to sign, the verifying official may sign on behalf of the sponsor after all efforts to obtain the sponsor's signature have failed and those efforts have been documented.

Once enrolled in DEERS, the child is eligible to receive medical care in two ways. The child may be able to obtain medical care and medications from military hospitals and clinics. The child can also use the cost share medical coverage, TRICARE, with civilian health providers. Getting health care from a uniformed service hospital or clinic, when available, saves money and paperwork. Military bases have Health Benefits Advisors to assist custodial parents with questions about medical coverage.

TRICARE uses the term "shared" rather than "covered" because the cost is shared by the beneficiary after an annual deductible cost has been satisfied. Claims to TRICARE can be submitted up to a year after treatment. Commencement of military medical benefits is determined by either the child's date of birth or the date(s) of the sponsor's military service, not the DEERS enrollment date. A TRICARE handbook explaining coverage is available by writing or calling:

TRICARE Management Activity (TMA)  
Public Affairs Branch  
Aurora, Colorado 80045-6900  
(303) 361-1000/1129

***Dependents Enrolled in DEERS (TRICARE)***

A legal dependent (one for whom paternity has been established) of a military person (active or retired) is eligible for TRICARE medical services through DEERS. If a caseworker wants to learn whether a child has already been enrolled in DEERS, he/she should **write** to the following address:

DMDC Support Office  
Attn: CA99  
400 Gigling Road  
Seaside, CA 93955-6771

Include the name and Social Security number (SSN) of the military service person, as well as the name, SSN, and date of birth of the dependent. Even if the child is already enrolled in DEERS, he/she may need to obtain a military I.D. to gain access to medical care facilities on base.

**NATIONAL MEDICAL SUPPORT NOTICE (NMSN)**

Send the National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) for Active Duty and Retired Military to DMDC. Currently DMDC will respond with a letter (in-lieu of the form) to notify you as to whether the child is already enrolled in DEERS. Once an active duty military member and family members have been enrolled in DEERS, they have medical benefits. These medical benefits do not include dental or vision care. (Dental coverage may be available at an additional cost to the service member.) At the present time, the NMSN does not result in the automatic enrollment of the child in DEERS. The custodial parent must follow the procedures in the previous section for enrollment if the child is not shown as enrolled.

**National Medical Support Notice**  
DMDC Support Office  
Attn: CA99  
400 Gigling Road  
Seaside, CA 93955-6771

Please do not send requests for medical coverage information or medical support orders to any DFAS office. Requests for medical information or medical orders will not be returned to the issuing agency.

Please do not send employment verifications or garnishment-related requests to DMDC. Employment verification requests will not be returned to the issuing agency.

#### **MEDICAL INSURANCE INFORMATION ON FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES**

Medical insurance information on DoD, DoE, EPA, and HHS civilian employees may be obtained from the human resources department of the employing agency.